

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action dated August 23, 2006, claims 14-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 01/25077 to Shinozaki (hereinafter the '077 document); and claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the '077 document and JP 2000-159212 to Fujiwara.

New claims 20-24 have been added. Support for these claims can be found, for example, in Figs. 4, 5, 6a, 6b, and 10a-10d. "[D]rawings alone *may* be sufficient to provide 'the written description of the invention' required by § 112, first paragraph." *Vas-Cath Inc. v. Mahurkar*, 19 USPQ2d 1111 (Fed. Cir. 1991). No new matter is involved.


A telephonic interview was conducted between Examiners Fiorilla and Chan and Applicant's representative Robert L. Showalter on October 16, 2006. Proposed amendments to claims 1 and 14 and new claim 20 were discussed. The Examiners opined that the amendments to claims 1 and 14 were sufficient to overcome the prior art applied against those claims. Because independent claim 20 was newly presented, the Examiners deferred taking a position regarding its allowability.

With this paper, claims 1 and 14 have been amended in the manner discussed during the telephone interview. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-11 and 14-19 define patentably over the applied prior art. It is further submitted that new claims 20-24 also define patentable subject matter.

In view of the above amendments, applicant submits that claims 1-11 and 14-24 define patentably over the applied prior art. Accordingly, it is submitted that the above referenced rejections should be withdrawn and this case allowed. Early notification of allowable subject matter is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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